

THE
W I D O W E S
I O Y.

OR
CHRIST his comfortable
SALVATION
To a comfortlesse Widow:

Being
Observations no lesse profitable then
comfortable for the losse of our
deceased friends.

By W. C.



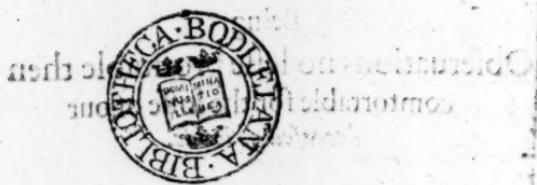
Sermons
4.

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THE TWO LADIES

BY
CHARLES
MURRAY
LONDON
1748



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L V K E 7. vers. 13.

When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and sayd unto her, Weepe not.

HE Prophet David tels vs, that *beauenesse may endure for a night, but ioy commeth in the morning*: and our Sauiour himselfe pronounceth a blessednesse to them that *mourne, for they shall be comforted*: which comfortable doctrine hee hauing immediatly in the Chapter going before deliuered in words, he doth now here by his deedes, make good on the behalfe of a poore Widow miserably mourning, and lamenting for the losse of the staffe and comfort of her life; her sonne, her onely sonne, now vpon the Biere, caryng to the place of buriall: Whom when the Lord saw, *he had compassion on, &c.*

The Lord] This shewes vnto vs his power: [*saw her*] here is his prouidence: [*had compassion*] here is his mercy, power, prouidence, and mercy, meete all together to comfort this comfortlesse Widow, *Weepe not*. His power was scene in raising her dead sonne: his prouidence, in that hee saw her: his mercy, in commiserating her griefe; her griefe, and the death of her sonne, worke both together for her comfort: for *the Lord seeing her, hath compassion on her*: And thus are we brought into the Text.

Which I may fitly terme a Comedy; it begins with sorrow, and ends with ioy: acted by two persons, which I make the two parts of my Text: ¹ a miserable woman [*her*] ² a mercifull comforter, [*The Lord*.] The woman is a Widow, the comforter is Christ: The woman acting a mournfull Tragedie, Christ making it end with a ioyfull *Plaudite*: In the one there is great misery, in the other, endlesse and boundlesse mercy: Great miserie; for here is a voyce heard of mourning,

ning, weeping, and great lamentation ; a Widow weeping for her onely sonne, and could not be comforted, because he was not : greater mercy ; for Christ ^{is compassionis} puts on the bowels of *compassion*, and without any intreay, restores miraculously life to her sonne, and vniexpectedly comfort to her selfe. First, of *her*, the woman, and her misery.

Touching the historic, it standeth thus : Christ hauing finished his Sermon in the Mount, he came downe vnto the citie of *Capernaum*, where hee healed the Centurions sicke seruant, and the next day he went vnto *Naim*, of which city this woman was an inhabitant : as he was entring into this citie, there met him a great multitude, carrying a Coarse, and this woman the mother, attending it with weeping eyes, whose misery, and cause of sorrow will appeare to be iust and great, if we doe weigh these subsequent passages.

First this [*her*:] this woman was not of the meanest or inferiour sort of the peo-

ple of the Citie, whose daily wants and necessities so injures and accustomes them with patience to beare many crosses and miseries, insomuch that vnto them they seeme lesse burdenosome: for *mali consuetudinem mali amaritudinem adimit*. And as they that are alwaies accustomed to liue in marsh and fennie places, are not so much offended with noysome foggie smels, as are they that liue in a more delicate and pure tract of ayre: So they whom their meanenesse of estate and condition, must many times make to want, yea in their greatest abundance to be full of wants, goe more lightly away with the burdens of miserie and misfortune, then such as haue these outward blessings of the world in greater abundance. This woman (I say) was not like in any probabilitie to haue beene of the meaner and inferiour ranke; for then shée might haue beene better able to haue passed this sorrow, as necessitie had made *her* subiect to many a former: but shée was of good esteeme and account in the Citie, which

may

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may bee gathered by this circumstance, that she went not alone, or with some few vnto the graue, but ~~with~~ ^{with} a great troupe and multitude, which we know is either out of honour and loue to the deceased, or out of respect vnto the liuing : it could not bee altogether out of honour and respect to the dead, for hee was but ~~nowise~~ ^{nowise} a very young man, and not as yet of any desert in the Citie, and therefore we may more then probably conjecture, that it was done as an honour vnto this VVidow, the mother of this young man, being some honorable and wel-respected Matron ; yet this woman sheweth *her* sonne, sheweth the smart of misery.

To teach vs this lesson : That there is no sexe, no age, no estate or condition whatsoeuer, which is, or can bee exempted from sorrow and miserie : not onely the poore begger that hath but from hand to mouth, but eu'en the greatest Potentate or Prince that euer liued, must haue his cares and causes of griefe. Crosses and afflictions are not tyed or limited to

any

any climate or countrey, to any family or kindred : age cannot priuiledge a man, wisedome cannot protect, policie cannot preuent, riches cannot purchase immunitie ; but as God causeth the Sunne to shine ouer all the world, on the vniust, as well as on the iust: so doth he send crosses, and causes of vexation and sorrow, as well to the honourable and rich, as to the poore and ignoble. Wee will looke no farther then to *Salomons* censure of this : *I sought in my heart to enjoy whatsoeuer was had by any of the sonnes of men ; I haue made me great houses, &c. and whatsoeuer mine eyes desired, I with-held it not from them. Then I looked on all the workes that my bands had wrought, and on all the trauell I had laboured to doe, and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.* All those his delights and pleasures, riches and treasures, could not giue him so much content, as to counteruail the sorrow, anxiety, and vexation of spirit which he was continually subiect vnto. And therefore Lawyers define life by weeping. The crying of children is a law.

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lawfull proofe of their liuing, to possesse
the miseries of this world: and at our go-
ing out God is said to wipe off teares, that
is, to take away labour and sorrow to-
gether.

Whereby is iustly reprooued the won-
derfull sottishnesse of worldly men, that
dote so much vpon the momentary and
sinfull pleasures of this sinfull world, and
looke for no other content, then what
they make vnto themselues in the enjoy-
ment of worldly things: Oh ! how won-
derfully haue men their hearts glued to e-
very small contentment they finde heere,
and thinke if they haue gotten much
goods, and store of treasure, and haue
laded themselues with honour and digni-
tie, that then they are out of the reach of
crosses. No, let no man thinke these out-
ward things to be any better then *Adams*
figge leaues, to hide our nakednesse, and
to shelters from those crosses, which are
incident vnto vs. Let no man put their
trust in these, for they will prooue like
vnto a Reede, on which if a man leane, it

will runne into his hand.

Secondly, as this woman was wealthy and of good esteeme, so shee was a widow; shee had beene before a married woman, and as shee had participated of those blessings which attend VVedlocke, so shee had many times felt those cares, which are incident vnto those who haue the care and charge of a Family; and being made a mother, felt no doubt the trueth of Gods sentence, I will greatly encrease thy sorrow, in sorrow shalt thou bring foorth thy children; and yet to adde more vnto *her* grieve, and which may seeme the greatest grieve of all, *her* husband, one halfe of *her* selfe dyes; and that not in his old and decrepit age, when all his pleasure was gone, and life it selfe growne to be but labour and sorrow: but in the flower of his youth, and not long after his mariage, which probably may be gathered by this, that hee left but one onely sonne, and this our Sauiour calles ~~successor~~, a yong Stripling, all which must needs make *her* widow-hood the more grieuous

grieuous (widow-hood in it selfe beeing
a crosse great enough) insomuch that the
Prophet *Dauid* reckoneth, and puts it a-
mong his Imprecations and curses on
Gods and his enemies. *Let his children bee* ^{Psal. 109.}
fatherlesse, and his wife a Widow. So the Pro-
phet *Ieremie*, *Lam. 1. 1.* Lamenting and
bewailing, the miserable estate of *Ierusa-
lem*, speaketh thus; *How doth the citie re-
maine solitary that was full of people.* Shee
is as a widow: And Chapter 5. 5. *Wee are
fatherlesse without fathers, and our mothers are
Widowes:* yet all this while shee beares these
crosses manfully, shee yeelds not vnto the
shee breakes not into open weeping, but
comforts her selfe, calling to minde those
many and sweet promises, and comforts
made by God ynto VVidowes: for God
hath promised to defend the fatherlesse
and widowes. *The Lord your God is God of
gods, which doth right vnto the fatherlesse an
Widowes.* And *Psalme 146. 9.* *The Lord kee-
peth the Stranger, he releueth the fatherles and
Widowes;* Yea, the Lord commits the care
of them vnto Magistrates, charging them

and all others, *Ex. 22.22.* *You shall not trouble the widow nor the fatherleſſe childe*: yea, the Lord out of his loue and care towards them, appoints part of the Tythe, for their reliefc. *Deut. 14.29.* Hee would haue them to bee remembred in their Feastes; *Deut. 27.19.* Hee menaceth a curse against him that wrongeth the widow: *Cursed be hee that hindreth the cause of the stranger, the fatherleſſe, and VVidow.* And *Ieremie 5.25.* hee reckoneth the neglecting of the widow, one cause of the destruction of the people.

With these and many other promises which shee found in Scripture no doubt but shee did continually comfort her selfe in her widow-hood, that though shee were yong, yet she did not affect a second marriage, and besides shee tooke it as a pledge of Gods great fauour vnto her, that hee had giuen her a sonne to bee a stay, and a comfort vnto her in her widow-hood: But see, to adde yet more vnto the complement of her miserie; God, who knowes how to giue vs tearesto drinke, in measure, and knoweth best when he hath laid

laid sorrow & affliction enough vpon his
children, leaues not the widow thus. As
not shhee, so neither are wee worthy to
know whereunto wee are referued. This
her yong sonne dyes, who was the light
of her eyes, and the ioy of her life. To
shew vnto vs thus much by the way; that
not onely old men must, but the yongest
that is may die, wee are no sooner come
into the world, but wee hasten out of the
world: The pace of death is soft and
sure, and euery man is a dying man till he
be dead. And therefore, wee must so set
our mortality before our eyes, as to thinke
euery day our last day, and labour care-
fully to redeeme the time ill past, because so
vncertaine is the time of our abode.

But what had this yong man done, thus
vntimely to bee cropt off in the budde of
his yeeres? Hee was but ^{havinge} a very
yong man, as his tender yeeres could not
patronize good counsell, and want of
grauitie giue authoritie to his person, to
be a prelident of vertue; so it is likely he
was not yet misled by the errors of youth,

much leſſe could hee haue beene a ring-leader vnto euill. Or why ſhould we lay ſinne to his charge, when the holy Ghost layes none; but rather charitably, yea conſiſtently perſwade our ſelues, that hee that was now about to doe ſo much for his body, had before done much more for his ſoule. Happily, God tooke him away, that hee ſhould not ſee the euill to come. And truely, if the mother had right-ly conſidered this, it had beene a cauſe rather to mitigate, then any way to exaſperate or aggrauate *her* grieſe, that God had ſo timely thus well prouided for her ſon; that though ſhe had loſt a ſonne, yet hea-uen had found a Saint, and though hee had beene neuer ſo deare and precious in her eyes, yet to haue reioyced, that ſhee had *layd vpon her treasure in heauen*. Had hee beene an vnnaturall *Cain*, a prophanie *Eſau*, a proud aspiring *Abſolon*, an uſurping *Adonyah*; this might haue redoubled *her* grieſe, to conſider, that from *her* loynes a chip ſhould haue beene hewen, to make a fire-brand in hell. But to haue a godly yong

yong *Iosiah*, to be taken away in his tender yeeres, that he might not see the euill to come; might cause *her* rather to magnifie his mercie, then to whine vnder the rod of correction. And heereof should all parents make a comfortable vse, when at any time God shall deale with them in the like case, by remouuing their hopefull yong plants, from out of his nursery of grace heere, and transplanting them into his Orchard of glory in heauen, there to flourish as Palmes for euermore.

But had this her sonne bin taken away in his infancy, her sorrow had been the lesse; shee had sustained paine and sorrow in bringing him into the word, care and feare in his nurture and education, and now that shee thought to haue receiued some comfort in him, for whom shee had often both wearied, and disquieted her selfe; behold, he dyes.

Thus it pleaseth God many times to deale with his dearest children, to lay affliction after affliction, putting into all their cups of comfort and contentments, bitter

bitter drams of sorrow & griefe. Whence
wee may learne, first how vncertaine a
thing it is to expe&t any certaine com-
fort in this world, we are all subiect to vi-
cissitude, change and alteration. We must
not expe&t any perpetuity of felicity here,
lest wee should forget to looke after any
other heauen then heere on earth. Doe
not we see by experience, that kingdomes
haue their declensions, and Crownes and
Scepters their crosses? and shall priuate
and particular persons expe&t greater sta-
bility? Secondly, it must teach vs how to
entertaine comforts, when God sendes
them; euen as the Apostle bids vs the
world, so to *use them, as though wee vsed
them not.* So to resolute of them, as if to
morrow we were to take our leaues of
them. As crosses and afflictions are not
of the nature of thole diseases which men
shall haue but once, and therefore wee are
so to take our leaue of them to day, as to
morrow to expe&t their returne: so on
the other side those comforts which men
enjoy in this world, are not perpetuall re-
sidenfa-

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fidenſaries, but euen like man himſelfe, of
ſhort continuance, their dayes are but a ſpan Psalm. 39. 6.
long, they are alwayes in tranſiſu, ſuddenly
vanished and gone, and therefore we muſt
reſolute no otherwise on their company,
then of paſſengerſ and traualerſ, heere to
day, and to morrow no more ſcene.

Yea, but this was not all, it was not on-
ly the fruit of her body that was thus un-
timely cut off, but it was her onely ſonne;
the holy ghost emphatically addes, that
ſhee was a *widow*, and this was *(worfte)* her
onely begotten ſonne, ſhee neuer had any
other, *Solum hunc in doloribus noverat, ſolum*
ſuis lactauerat tberibus, neither had ſhe any
hope of more, for her husband was dead,
and this onely ſon left vnto her as a pledge
and remembrance of her husbands loue;
the ſight of whose louely face ſhe vſed *(as*
Saul did Davids musicke) to driue away
the vexing ſpirit of ſorrow and griefe:
yea more, ſhe was not onely hereby deſti-
tute of comfort, but altogether hopeleſſe
of posterity; for this her ſonne was *bacu-*
lus ſenectutis, ſtirps generis, ramuſculus ſucess-

C

fonis,

sonis, and now the inheritance was left for
strongers to inherit. Was not heere cause
of griefe? I might say, almost of despaire.

Tis true; yet happily God did deale
thus with her, euen because it was *her* on-
ly sonne, thereby to punish some sinne in
the mother; it may be she had taken too
much delight in this *her* sonne, and there-
fore God caused *her* to sustaine much sor-
row for him dead, whom happily living,
she did too much affect; *her* motherly care
was turned into an ouer-prized indul-
gence; now God makes that *her* greatest
crosse, wherin she expected greatest com-
fort; because shee made that *her* pride,
which should haue beeene *her* care. The
most louely flowers of hearts-delighting
joy, eftsoones prove the vntimely and vn-
expected seedes of bitter sorrow, and God
willing to weape our childish affections
from that ouer-weening opinion we haue
of earthly delights, many times so brings
to passe, that in the fruition of what things
our joy hath abounded, in the losse of the
same, our sorrow should much more a-
bound.

bound. But let not mee heare lay open a
 pit of despaire for any afflicted soule, nor
 adde sinne to *her* sorrow; the holy Ghost
 layes none to her charge, then why should
 I? but rather say with our Sauiour, Nei-
 ther did this yong man sinne, nor this wi-
 dowl, *but that the workes of God might be ma-* John 9.3
nifest in them, as hereafter wee shall heare.
 Only let this teach vs Christian wisdom,
 so to temper our affections in a godly me-
 diocrity, and so dispose & order our loue
 and delight in earthly things, that it neuer
 carry vs beyond Religion, beyond our
 selues, so shall we make the yoke of Gods
 afflictions easie vnto vs, so shall wee with
 a great deale of patience part with our
 greatest and most endeared delights.

Well, admit this was inflicted on *her* as
 a punishment for her sinne, why was not
 shee strooken with death her selfe, that as
 liuing she could not expect many crosses,
 so being dead, might neuer feele more sor-
 row? No doubt, *her* loue was as great to
 this her only sonne liuing, and her sorrow
 for him dead, as euer was *Danids* to *Absa-*

2. Sam. 18. 33. *Now when hee cryed, Oh my sonne Absalon, my sonne, my sonne Absalon, would God I had dyed for thee. Had it been in her owne election, shace would haue redemeed her sons life wth the losse of her owne. But God deales many times with his children, as wife Tutors vnto Princes children, strike them whom they most affect, and though hee doeth not correct them in his wrath and furie, yet hee chooseth so to smite, the smart may longest remaine.*

2. Kng. 19. 4. *By this time I thinke you haue heard of a miserable (Her) a distressed widdow, and you may wel ioyne with her, and she with Eliab, It is enough, O Lord, take my soule. For it is not to bee doubted, but while her sonne lay sicke on his death bed, the mother sat dayly on or by the bed, with sad fighes, with feruent and deuout prayers, soliciting God, that now it was high time to put to his helping hand, and to bee mindful in the performance of those most gracious promises that he had made vnto widdowes, that now it was seasonable to make good that doctrine which the day before*

before he had deliuered in words, **Blesſed**
are they that mourne, for they ſhall be confor-
ted, but yet ſhe is not heard, *her ſonne dies*:
By whose death ſhee was plunged into
ſuch a depth of griefe, and almost swal-
lowed vp in a gulfe of despaire; that now
ſhee could no longer conteine, but needes
muſt breake foorth into open weeping,
manifestly ſhewing thereby, that either
the promises of God were vaine, and of
none effect, or that ſhee was caſt off, and
forſaken of God, and ſo his promises did
in no wiſe appertaine vnto *her*: for theſe
two (widowhood, and want of iſſue) were
accounted among the Iſraelites to
be two great curses. Yet more, *her misery*
was ſo great, that it moued all the Citie to
commiſeration: for they went out with
her vnto the graue, and now there was no
hope of any effect of Gods promises, tou-
ching comfort to this mournefull wi-
dow.

VWhence we may learne, that God
doth ſuffer his children many times to be
ſo much crushed vnder the yoke of affi-

ction, and outward crosses in this world, that not onely to the eye of men they seeme to be forsaken, but euen in themselves they feele no comfort, find no hope. Thus was *David* many times so heauily burdened, that hee seemed vnto himselfe, as though hee were forsaken: *Hath the Lord forgotten to be mercifull? hath he shut up his mercies in displeasure for euermore?* So our blessed Sauiour himselfe when hee was in the flesh, felt the hand of his Father so heauy vpon him, that it made him in the bitterness and anguish of his soule to cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* This is the doing of the Lord, and it may seeme maruailous in our eyes, vntill we consider the reasons; which may be reduced to these three heads:

First, because extremities are the best tryals of a Christians faith: ordinary crosses, as they are common, so is it more facile to beare them. To hope well when we see no danger, or to beleue Gods promises, when we see them either alreadie performed, or at least a probable and likely

ly meanes to effect them; it is easie, any man can doe it: but to hope when we see no hope of safetie, and to beleue Gods faithfulness, when wee see no other meanes, but as to rayse children out of stones, to fetch water out of a flintie Rocke, to hold out a three yecres famine with an handfull of meale, and a little oyle; here indeed is a true hope, and a nobletryall of a strong faith: for hope that is seene is no hope, and faith grouned on; or guided by the blind leader of carnall reasoun, is no faith. Thus God tryed *Abrahams* faith in that great extremitie, when he commanded him to offer vp his onely sonne. Thus was *Jobs* faith, patience, and constancie tryed by those extreme crosses on his bodie, goods, and children. God dealeth with his children, as Fencers with their scholers; they first begin with wooden cudgels, after they goe to weapons with blunted edges and points, and last of all, as they grow in skill, and to put their skill to the tryall, they play at sharpe, and many times fetch blood.

blood. So God inures his children, first vnto pettie crosses, and so inflicteth greater and greater, at last hee will strike with the sharpe, and draw blood from their soules, onely to try what proficients they haue beeene in the schoole of faith and patience.

Secondly, because hee would make the deliuerance the more ioyfull, when it doth come: for the greater are our afflictions, the greater shall be the waight of glory, and the more welcome vnto vs: as the Apostle speaketh concerning sinne in the godly: so it is true concerning affliction, God many times so bringing to passe, that where sorrow hath abounded, there ioy should much more abound: So that afflictions, they are but preparatiues to greater comforts.

Vintners we see oftentimes set before their guests that haue dainty palates, bri-nish and salt meates, that so their wine may haue the better taste and relish: So because it is mans nature too slightly to esteeme of the mercies, fauours, and comforts

forts of God, as either to forget, or to extenuate and lessen them, hec doth many times giue them full cuppes of bitter sorrow, to the end that they may the more highly esteeme and prize his mercies and fauours when he bestowes them.

Thirdly, God seemes to leaue his without all hope of comfort, because they should ascribe all the praise and honour of their deliuerance vnto him onely. Man is of a dogged nature; as in aduersitie, like the dogge that snarles and bites at the stone, and neuer lookes to the hand that threw it: so in prosperitie, when wee fare well, and obtaine any blessed and comfortable deliuerance from any cuill, wee are readie presently to share glory with God, saying, This haue I gotten by my care, industrie, and wisedome, or else attribute it vnto second causes, and neuer looke vp vnto God to giue him the glorie. But let vs know, that God is a ielous God, he will not part stakes with any man; and therefore he will many times suffer vs to sinke so low, that all meanes in the world shall

D faile,

faile, before he will raise vs vp, to the end
we may acknowledge, that God is aboue,
and beyond all meanes.

The vse of this shall be none other then
those words of Saint Peter, *Dearly-belo-
ued, thinke it not strange concerning the fierie
tryall which is among you, to prooue you, as
though some strange thing were come vnto you:*
but put on Iobs resolution, *Though the Lord
slay me, yet will I put my trust in him.*

2

Thus haue you scene a tragicall scene
of sorrow, personated and acted in and by
a miserable and mournful widow, lament-
ing the losse of her onely sonne: now we
are come to make it end in a ioyfull *pla-
nite*, while we looke vpon Christ her mer-
cifull comforter; for hee seeing her, hath
*compassion on her, and sayth vnto her, VVeep
not.* Wherein wee may obserue these
parts: 1. The time: *When the Lord saw her:*
2. The authour, *The Lord:* 3. Two ante-
cedent causes of her comfort: first, Christ
his omniscience or prouidence, hee *saw
her*; and this I may call the seed of her
comfort: secondly, his mercy, *he had com-
passion*.

passion on her : and this I may call the ground, into which it was cast, and where it tooke roote. 4. The comfort it selfe, which is first verball onely, *Weepenot*: and here it is sprung into a blade : Secondly reall; for she receiued her sonne againe, as the History sheweth : and thus it is growne to an eare.

When the Lord saw her. Was there a time when Christ did not know *her* miserie? no : Christ knew before hee came to see *her*, and by his Almighty power, whiles her sonne lay vpon his death-bed, could haue preuented his death, and his mothers sorrow, but he deferres it vntill this time; to teach vs this lesson ; That God a-lone best knowes when to wound, and when to heale; when to kill, and when to make aliue, when to afflict with sorrow, and when to send comfort : we are not to limit God to times and seasons, nor yet to prescribe vnto him when wee should haue deliuernances from dangers, and comfort in crosses and afflictions. *My times* (saith *David*) that is, times of prospe-

rity and aduersity, *are in thy hand*: that is, to order and dispose according to thy wisedome, to thy good will and pleasure. And therefore though the Lord may seem a long time not to giue audience, nor yet to behold the afflictions of his Saints; yet there wil come a *when*, a time, that will bring comfort unto them.

The Lord: Heere is the Author. All true & sound comfort comes from God in *Christ*, and from him onely is to bee expected; hee is the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort: it is hee that sendes comfort in afflictions, yea life in death it selfe, by his power and mercy hee sweetens the bitter waters of death, with the wood of his Crosse, making that which is *seen*, as though it were not: so that though he hath not taken away death it selfe, yet he hath taken away the tyrannicall power of death, insomuch that through him wee may insultingly say, *Oh death where is thy sting*. Christ is the true hearbe of grace, which doth mitigate (if not wonderfully sweeten) all those cups of gall and vine-
ger,

ger, which are the *portion* and the *portion*,
of the children of grace here, before they
can be the children of glory in heauen.

The Vse whereof is, first, to stirre vp
euery one of vs, to seeke onely vnto God
for comfort, and to satiate and delight
our selues onely in him, as in the God of
all comfort and consolation : If hee send
vs comfort, if he be the rocke vpon whom
wee build our consolation, no affliction
can discomforthe vs, no feare can affright vs,
nor death it selfe can dismay or appall vs ;
vnto him therefore, and onely to him, let
vs seeke for comfort.

Secondly, heereby is discouered and re-
prooued, the vngodly practise amongst
many now adayes, that in the time of
sorrow in stead of going to God for com-
fort, they runne a cleane contrary way to
the deuill. They will goe to an Ale house
to drinke away sorrow, or else get them-
selues into some jouiall company, and to
passe away the time. And so likewise, in
the time of sickenesse, in stead of looking
vp to heauen, they take hell for comfort.

by seeking to beguile the time, and passe away the tediousnesse of the paine, with idle tales, cardes, dice, or some such like vanitie.

Thirdly, it yeeldes matter of comfort vnto Gods children, when they shall consider that God is their comforter, what need they feare, who bee their tormentor? If wee had the keeping of this comfort in our owne hands and hearts onely, as *Adam* had his innocency, wee might easily leefe it as *Adam* did his, and *Satan* who was euer envious of mans good, would be ready to picke and steale it away from vs; but God keepes it for vs in heauen, and as hee did vnto the children of Israel in the wildernesse, daily renew shewres of *Manna*, so doth he distill drops of heauenly comfort daily, into the hearts of true Israclites, in this their wildernesse, and vale of teares.

Thus of the Author, now of the Causes: The first antecedent cause, or the seed of the womans comfort was, that *the Lord* *saw her*. As not shee, no more can any Saint

Saint of God bee in any distresse, but hee
 sees it, and good reason; for he that made the
 eye, shall not he see? He that made the eare,
 shall not he heare? and hee that made the heart,
 shall not he understand the sorrowes of eue-
 ry afflicted soule? Yes, he sees, he heares,
 he ynderstands all. Neither comfort,
 nor blessing, crosse, nor curse can come
 vnto vs, but by Gods prouidence and
 fore-sight: not a haire of our heades can
 be diminished, nor a cubite can be added
 vnto our stature, without the prouidence
 of our heauenly Father. It is neither con-
 stellation of starres, influence of the Ce-
 lestiall bodyes, coniunctions of Planets,
 nor any such notionall fantasie of a Ma-
 thematical braine, that can worke our
 weale or woe. It is not the malice of the
 deuill, or wicked men, can hurt Gods
 Church, or children; for God sees, his
 prouidence is aboue all. And this pro-
 uidence of God, hath as well a restray-
 ning, as ordaining power: for if either
 strength, or policie, could preuaile against
 Gods Church it could not stand, if either

the curses of men, or the indeauours of the powers of darknesse should bee effectuall, all would bee hell: but God sees, and his prouidence disposeth.

The Lord saw her; Hee did not shut his eyes, nor turne his backe vpon *her*, but *sees her*, takes especiall notice of *her*; to teach man what hee should doe, to turne his eyes from beholding vanitie, & looke vpon the poore saints of God in miserie. What's the reason men should now a-dayes, so much degenerate frō *Christ* their Lord? Men now adayes are growen like the Ostrich, that while her egges are in the sand, shee will not looke on them; shee leaues them, she forgets them. When the clouds of aduersitie arise, mens sightes are dimmed, they cannot see: when *Dauid* is in aduersitie, *his friends and his acquaintance stand afarre off*; What's the reason? Surely, men either haue their eyes, through selfe-loue turned inward, onely to looke vpon themselues; or els the profits and pleasures of this world, play the *Pbiliſtims* with *Sampſon*, cleane put out their

their eyes, and so they are become idoles; eyes they haue, and see not the miseries of Gods saints. Let such take heed, least the Lord giue them also a sorrowfull mind, and a trembling heart, and they looke for comfort in swaine, till their eyes fall out. Deut. 28. 61. For hee that hideth his eyes from the poore, shall haue many curses.

The Lord aþ her: Marke the gradation which heere the holy Ghost vseth, it is worth the noting, hee spake comfort vnto this woman, *VVeep not*. But first, *hee had compassion on her*, and before hee had compassion on her, he *saw her*; not that any thing in God is first or last, for all things with him are coeternal, and admit no prioritie of subsistence, but onely as hee doth actuate them towards men. First, *hee sees*, then *hee is moued with compassion*, then he speakes comfort, *VWeep not*.

To shew vs that God may *see*, though hee haue not *compassion*, hee may haue *compassion* though hee doe not presently comfort; if hee comfort not, yet hee may haue *compassion*; and though he shew not

compassion, yet certainly hee *sees*: which
 may serue for admirable comfort to
 Gods children, when the swelling waters
 of sorrow are cleane gone ouer their
 soules; though the Lord doth not presen-
 ly send thee comfort, yet hee may haue
 compassion on thee; and though as yet hee
 hath not compassion, yet certainly he *sees*:
 and seeing thee is a cause to mooue him
 to compassion, and his compassion will cer-
 tainly in the ende bring comfort. The
 like gradation God vseth in his iustice,
 towards sinners, which may be aterroure
 to euery impenitent person; first he seeth
 their sinnes, then his wrath is kindled,
 and his *jealousie waxeth hot*, and then hee
 strikes, and therefore though hee doeth
 not plague a sinner presently, yet hee is
 angry, and though hee seeme not to bee
 angrie, yet certainly hee sees him, and
 the sight of his sinnes will kindle his
 wrath: and *who knowes the power of his
 wrath?* surely it will being a fearefull
 judgement.

Secondly, God doth first *see our misery*,
 before

before hee is moued with *compassion*, and send comfort? let it teach euery Christian that desires comfort; first of all to make his misery knowen vnto God. We are all beggers, and they we know vse to lay open their vlcers and sores, to moue the passengers *compassion*. Let vs not bee so proud as to scorne to lay open our wants vnto God, for except God see our misery, how can hee haue *compassion*? to conceale thy misery from God, is to stop the fountaine & well-head of Gods mercie. The Prophet *Dauid* proues the truth hereof vnto vs, *When I held my tongue*, that is, while I concealed my misery, and did not make it knowen vnto God, *my bones consumed*: that is, my sorrow increased, I found no comfort, *then I acknowledged my sinne vnto thee*, neither bid I mine iniquity, for *I thought, I will confess against my selfe my wickednesse vnto the Lord, and thou forgauest the punishment of my sinne*. Vpon his confession God *saw* his misery; *seeing it, was moued with compassion*; and this brought comfort. It was his practise: for *Psal. 51.*

before, in the 12, verſe he prayes, *Restore unto me the ioy of thy ſaluation.* In the 5. verſ. he firſt inuites God to ſee and looke vpon his miſery, *Behold, I was borne in iniquity, and in finne hath my mother conceiued me.* God grant the like practiſe may be ours.

The Lord ſaw her. God hath a four-fold eye: Firſt of Maiesty, Secondly of Iuſtice, Thirdly, of Prudence, Fourthly, of Compassion. With the firſt he lookeſ on himſelfe only, and this no man can ſee and liue, as God told *Moyses.* With the ſecond hee lookeſ vpon finne and ſinners, and this is an eye of terror, it ſparkles with fire of reuenge, in regard whereof, euery man hath cauſe to pray, *Turne thy face away from our finnes.* With the third, hee lookeſ on all his workeſ, and by it hee or-dereth all things in weight and meaſure. With the fourth, he lookeſ on the fatherleſſe and widdowes, and all his poore and needie Saints: for ſeeing them, hee hath compassion on them, and they like the Sunne in the Firmament giueſ both life and light to all ſublunary bodies, by this

is euery afflicted soule abundantly reioyced, and inuited with boldnesse to come vnto the Throne of grace, and cry *Abba, Father.* And for this may euery sinner safely pray, Lord shew vs the light of thy countenance. Graciously looke vpon our afflictions, Pitifully behold the sorrowes of our hearts. And with this eye did hee looke on this widdow: for seeing her, *he had compassion on her.* Heere is the second antecedent cause of this womans comfort, and may be called *causa subalternata*, as Logicians terme it, because it is both an effect, and a cause, an effect, in respect it proceeded from Christ his seeing her; and a cause, in that it produced and effected her comfort. First let vs consider it an effect: Christ did not see her in misery and passe by her without any regard, but ~~impassion~~ puts on the bowels of *compassion*, and is touched with the fense of her sorrow, *when he saw, he had compassion on her.* The Priest may see the wounded man, and passe by on the one side, the Leuite may come neere the place, goe and looke.

on him, and passe by on the other side, but the good Samaritane Christ Iesus, *when he sees him, he hath compassion on him.*

The vse hereof is for exhortation, with those words of the Apostle, *Let the same minde bee in you that was euuen in Christ Iesus.* If wee are Christians, let vs imitate our Master Christ Iesus. *Hee saw her*, but what manner of sight was this? There is a good sight, and a bad sight. The good sight is threefold, First, of discretion or discerning. Second, of contemplation. The third, of commiseration; the last is the best, especially when it hath the misery of Gods Saints for i'ts obiect: and the brighter our eyes are thus to see, the neerer wee come to God the Father, who is the God of mercy; and to God the Sonne, our Lord and Master, who never sees his seruants in misery, but *in compassion, hath compassion on them*, and to God the holy Ghost, who is the *comforter*. But men now a dayes are quicke sighted, but slow to haue *compassion*. They see as *Cham* to deride, as *Michal* to mocke, as *Iobs* friends, to espie out their

their sinnes, to agrauate their infirmities, to adde to their sorrow, to trample vnder their feete the comfortlesse and dejected soule, in stead of powring wine and oyle into their wounds like Christ, like his tormentours giue *gall and vineger to drinke*. Is this Christianisme? t's contrary to the practise of Christ. Is it Religion? no; for *pure Religion before God the Father, is to visit the fatherlesse and widdowes in their aduersity*. Surely then we may conclude, that more beare the name, then haue nature from Christ; more professe, then practise Religion; otherwise how can wee behold the misery of Gods Church and children vwithout compassionate, and relenting hearts? How can we see the afflictions of *Joseph, and yet drinke wine in bowles, and sing to the sound of the viall*? How can wee see those *Foxes which destroy the vineyard*; and not be moued with compassion to pray vnto our Spouse *to take them*? How can wee see that man of perdition *Sampson-like* send Foxes with firebrands in their tayles into the Lords corne, and

not

not be moued with *compassion* to pray vnto
the Lord of the haruest? How can we see
 in our neighbouring countreyes abroad,
 the beauty of *Sion* to bee defaced, and her
 walles beaten downe almost euen with
 the ground, and not be moued with *com-
 passion*, *nor haue any pity on the dust thereof*?
 Let vs beware lest the like happen vnto vs,
 and there bee none to pity, nor to haue
 compassion on vs. How can we at home
 see so many poore, needy, naked, sicke, and
 comfortlesse Christians lie in misery and
 want, and we passe by like so many Priests
 and Leuites vwithout any remorse, any
compassion? *Blessed are the mercifull, for they
 shall obtaine mercy*: mercy and compassion
 it is one badge of a true Christian heere
 on earth, *by this shall men know that you are
 my disciples, if yee loue one another*. It is the
 only Brand-mark that I read of, by which
 Christ at the last day shal know the sheep
 from the goats, *Come yee blessed of my Fa-
 ther, for I was hungry and yee fed mee, naked,
 and yee clothed mee, in prison and yee visit-
 ed mee.*

He had compassion on her : Now consider it, as it was a cause of her comfort, or as the ground whereinto the seed of her comfort was cast and tooke root. Christ was not sent vnto, to come to rayse her dead sonne, and being come, was not intreated or sued vnto, but voluntarily, and out of his owne accord ; for hee was moued with *compassion*, t'was his mercy and *compassion* that was the cause of her comfort. To teach vs, first, that what blessing or comfort soeuer either spirituall or temporall we enjoy , Gods mercy is the cause of it. It must bee his mercy alone, that must feoffe vs in all blessings and comforts whatsoeuer, and except this mercy of God in Christ, feoffe vs in blessings and comforts, as our sins do in crosses & curses wee perish. Secondly , that God of himselfe is so ready to haue mercy that before *we call be will answere* ; and *whiles wee speake, he will heare* : he loues not onely to exceed our sinnes, but our very desires in mercy. Thirdly, we may see the gradation of Christ his loue to his saints, descending

vpō them by a ladder frō heauen, by three
 steppes or rounds: ¹ in heart, ² in word,
³ in deed: in heart, for he hath *compassion*:
 in word, with a *noli flere*, *weepe not*: in
 deed, for hee restored her dead sonne to
 life, but first it beginnes at the heart. Phi-
 losophers teach vs, that life naturall first
 begins at the heart; so grace, the life spiri-
 tuall, is first feated in the soule; the heart is
 first moued to *compassion*, then the toung
 to pitie: for (*ex abundantia cordis*) out of the
abundance of the heart, the tongue speaketh;
 and hee that hath not a compassionate
 heart, cannot haue a pitifull tongue, but
 from the teeth outward, and not to speake
 comfortably, or shew comfort, by word
 or deed, or both, is an euident signe of a
 hard heart; and from hardnesse of heart
 good Lord deliuer vs.

You haue heard the causes of her com-
 fort, Christ his *seeing her*, & Christs *com-
 passion on her*, now heare the effect of both,
be saith unto her, WWeepe not. Hee saw her:
 here the comfort was but in the seed. *Hee
 had compassion*: there the seed was cast in-

to the ground, and tooke deepe roote,
Wheepe not: here it is sprung into a blade.
 This good Samaritan Christ Iesus, contenteth not himselfe to see this wounded woman, (for indeed she had a *wounded spirit*) and to haue *compassion on her*, but goes vnto her, bindes vp her wounds, poures wine and oyle into them, and takes care for her farther comfort, *wheepe not*. To teach vs, that it is not sufficient for vs, when we see any in miserie, onely to bee moued with compassion, but wee must speake some *words of comfort in due season*: it is the Apostle his rule, our tongues must vter the tender affections of our hearts; and our hearts, as they are, or should bee the ground, where mercy must roote, must sometimes shew, that there is life, by sending foorth some buddes into the tongue, which is the hearts best interpreter, and commonly speaks the language of the heart; if the heart conceiue *compassion*, the tongue must vter *wheepe not*.

Wheepe not. Here comes our Sauiour now, and makes good in performance his

comfortable doctrine, which was in
words and promises; *Blessed are they that
mourne*: hee comes with a towell in his
hands, and wipes away the brinish teares
from the blubbered and furrowed cheeks
of this sorrowfull widow, and turnes
her sadness into gladnesse, her fasting in-
to feasting; her slobbes and sighes, into
songs and prayses of deliacrance: such is
the power, prouidence, and mercy of our
gracious Lord, and mercifull Sauiour, to
rayse vp vnto his children in the middest
of sorrow, sudden and vnxpected com-
fort.

But here some sad dejected Christian,
co-partner with this widow in the same
or like cause of griefe, may yet refuse to
be comforted, and iustifie both the cause
and act of sorrow: for the Prophet *Esay*
complained in his dayes, that *the righteous
man perished, and no man considered it in his
heart*: besides, it is not found through the
whole sacred Storie of our Sauiours life,
that euer hee was seene to laugh, but to
weepe often: and besides all, this woman
lost

lost her sonne, and therefore a senslesse
stupiditie in her, not to haue mourned,
would haue argued not onely want of
loue, but of nature and humanitie; or to
haue had ~~more~~ ^{more} courage aboue and be-
yond the strength of nature: for how qui-
et souuer the morall Doctors haue made
themselues, yet their rules haue neuer
counteruailed all their troubles. The wi-
lest and most resolute Moralist that euer
was, look't pale, when he was to taste his
poysonfull Hemlocke, and why? because
to grieue at crosses, and to feare death is
naturall, is to bee a man; why then doth
our Sauiour forbid her, saying; *VVeepen not.*

We must know for all this, that the God
of nature will haue vs sometime, (though
not to deny) yet to curbe nature; and
grace must teach vs to doe that sometime
which nature cannot, for courage and
constancie against all crosses, and then to
be least shaken, when most assayled, com-
meth from the rules of an higher art then
naturall wisedome was euer able to teach.
Not that grace would make a man not be-

affectionate, as not to mourne with them
that mourne, and weep with them that weep:
for euен this is a lesson which euery man
must learne in the schoole of grace; but di-
rect vs to moderate the inordinate, and
ouer-passionate affections of nature, that
they shoulde not mourne as men without hope,
for them that sleepe in the Lord.

Weepe not. Here (mee thinkes) I am ta-
ken with admiration, to conceiue in what
amazement this sorrowfull soule, and all
the mournfull company stood, to see one
silly man, and that a stranger, to come
with such a song of melody into a *house*
of mourning, and to present such a disso-
nant and discording dittie to so dolefull a
tune, and yet I cannot chuse but admire
more, how suddenly their sorrow was tur-
ned into comfort, and mourning into
mirth; while I consider, who it is that
sayes vnto her, *weepe not. Vox hominem so-
nat, oh Deus certe*, the sound of the voyce
bewrayes him to be a man, but the mat-
ter that he speakes, *mightyliely declares him to
be the Sonne of God.* God speakes by his
Sonne,

Sonne, the brightnesse of his glory , and the engraued forme of his Person, out of his Word vnto all, both good and bad: but it is not the sound of the voyce of God, but the matter which he speaks, that argues loue: he may speake vnto an enemie as vnto Satan , *Satan whence commest thou? Job 1.* in anger, as vnto Adam, when he called him to an account , *Adam where art thou? Gen. 3.* He speakes peace to none but to his owne: it is vnto them and vnto their soules that he fayes, *I am thy saluation:* It is with them that hee doth indent, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people:* and happy that soule vnto whom in the middest of sorrow, Christ shall vter this comfortable voyce, *Weepe not.*

The Church of God is compared to a shipp sayling on the sea; euery Christian is a passenger in this Vessell, Christ is the Pilot and Steeres-man, he still sits at the Helme, let the weather be neuer so foule, let the sea and waues of crosseles rise one vpon another with neuer such swelling surges, yet if my Sauiour say vnto my soule,

soule, *I am thy saluation*, I will never despair, if my steeres-man say vnto mee as vnto his Disciples; *Feeare not*, *O yee of litle faith*, that litle faith I haue shall make me so confident as not to be dismayed, if my Sauiour meete mee, though not in the flesh, yet but in his word, as he doth here this comfortlesse widow with a *noli flere*, *weepe not*, though he take away from mee father or mother, brother or sister, my nearestand dearest comfort in the world, I will not mourne as without hope, but comfort my selfe in his comfortable promises.

Thus haue you seene a sorrowfull mother, following her dead sonne with teare-dewed cheeke, a passionate multitude attending this pensiue widow, a compassionate Lord stopping their mouthes, wiping their eycs, and cheering their hearts, with a comfortable *noli flere*, *VWeepe not*. But this is not all, let me adde something farther then my Text, yet not beyond the Text, for tis in the Hystory hee gaue her her sonne aliue againe; and thus the blade is

is growne to an eare, from a verball to a
reall comfort. To teach vs first, that it **is**
not sufficient for vs to haue a tender heart
and a bemoaning tongue, to those that
are in want and miserie, but our handes
must be inlarged, our hearts towards poor
needy Christians must be so affected, that
some worke of charitic and mercy, might
be effected.

Secondly, and for conclusion of all,
whereas this woman in the depth of *her*
sorrow found comfort, and the yong
man in the midst of death found life, we
may learne, that both to liue, and to liue
comfortably, are in, and from *Christ*
alone.

But some sorrowfull soule may yet
farther obiect and reason, that well might
this woman receiue a great deale of com-
fort, for shee had the reall and bodily pre-
sence of *her* blessed Sauiour, whose very
lookes were able to reuiue a drooping
and languishing soule; and besides to his
presence, he annexed his Power, miracu-
lously raising her dead sonne to life, and
thereby vnbspeted comfort to her selfe,

but now *Christ* is ascended into heauen, and there shall remaine till his seconde comming; besides miracles are now ceased, how then shall I by this example any whit comfort my selfe; how shall I expect restitucion of my losse, restauration of my comfort.

I answere, these doubts proceed but from the weaknesse of our faith; shall the eyes of the body minister comfort to the soule, and shall not Faith the Eye of the soule doe much more? Rubbe but the scales of infidelitie from these eyes; and then, euen now by faith thou mayest see thy Sauiour, sitting at the right hand of God, making continuall intercession for thee. But why doe I grant that *Christ* is absent from his Church and children? Hee is not; as *Abraham* in the Parable answered *Dives*, *They haue Moses and the Prophets*, so I say, wee haue *Christ* still, haue we not his owne promise: *Loe, I am with you to the end of the world*. Doth hee not daily speake vnto our soules, by the Spirit, the Comforter, and to our eares by his holy word, as comfortably as euer hee

he did vnto this woman, when hee layd vnto her, *WVcepe not*. May not wee daily heare him say; *Blessed are the poore in spirit; Blessed are they that mourne for they shall bee comforted; Come vnto mee all yee that are heavy laden, and I will refresh you, and you shall finde rest vnto your soules*. As for the comfort this woman had, by the rai-
sing of *her* dead sonne, know, that this was but a temporall and short life, and when hee badde *her* not to weepe, this comfort was as short, if not shorter then the former; for certainely afterwards so long as shee liued, shee would haue cause to weepe, by daily renewed causes of sor-
row. But wee howsocuer wee loose our friends now, shall one day see a more bles-
sed raising of them, neuer any more to bee deprived of their societie: and then shall *Christ* pronounce words which shall bring more durable comfort then these to this woman, for then shall *all teares bee wiped from our eyes* neuer to feele more sor-
row. Till which time the Lord giue vs grace to liue religiouly, and to wait patiently.

F I N I S.